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Mythes of the Road



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RHYMES OF THE ROAD

WRITTEN FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT
OF BROTHER KNIGHTS OF
THE GRIP SACK AND
OTHER FRIENDS

BY I. E. NICHOLS

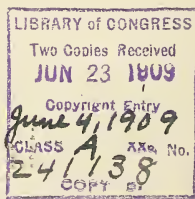


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DEDICATORY

*“ Rhymes of the Road ”; what can they be?
Ideas gathered now and then,
Which hastily I’ve jotted down
To entertain the trav’ling men.*

*“ Rhymes of the road ”; to mother dear
I dedicate this little tome;
For mother often thinks of me,
And oftentimes wonders where I roam.*

*What’s dearest to the trav’ler’s heart,
And makes his efforts worth the while? —
The thoughts of mother and her love,
Remembrances of mother’s smile.*

*Now as I send this volume forth,
Fresh from my ever-willing pen,
Methinks I see my mother smile,
Then read it o’er and smile again.*

THE TRAV'LING MAN

HE's up before it's fairly light,
To catch an early train,
And then he's jolted in a bus
Until he screams with pain;
So many towns each day to make,
And trains so often late,
Sometimes he hires a livery
To hustle up his gait.

When evening comes this trav'ling man
Arrives at the hotel,
And after eating, seats himself
To write and rest a spell;
With orders copied, work all done,
So tired he's almost dead,
'Tis midnight ere this trav'ling man
Finds time to go to bed.

Sometimes his room is all O. K.
But often it is not;
Sometimes he finds it much too cold,
Quite oft 'tis much too hot.
Sometimes the bed is nice and soft,
The sleep he gets is sweet;
Sometimes the bed-springs hurt his back,
The bed-bugs bite his feet.

His business is of such a kind,
He always hungry feels ;
Each day the trav'ling man should get,
At least, three good square meals.
The landlord knows his appetite,
He has him on the string,
And tells the cook, " a trav'ling man
Can eat most anything."

Beef, mutton, chicken, codfish balls,
Eggs boiled as hard as rocks ;
The trav'ling man should have, I'm sure,
A stomach like an ox.
He does not care for rarebit, yet
Will sometimes eat a hair,
Within the butter found so oft,
It could not be called rare.

But hair in butter is not all
The curious things he eats,
He often has a change or two
That's in the line of meats ;
Within his soup or consomme
A water bug is found ;
Sometimes he swallows it alive,
Sometimes waits till it's drowned.

He orders roast beef *well done, sure*;
They bring it on so red,
He sheds a tear and says, "I fear
This animal's not dead."
Altho' the butter's often balled,
All druggist salesmen know,
Hair tonics never are required
To make its whiskers grow.

Sometimes the food that's brought to him,
Ain't fit to feed a cat;
And ev'ry egg contains a chick;
"Now, what do you think o' that!"
But hotels are not all alike.
Some are so very fine,
That if he could at such he would
Stay nearly all the time.

AN EPISODE OF TRAVEL

ONCE on a time, a certain maid,
Whose looks were very plain,
Set out to take a pleasure trip
Upon an Erie train.

For her to find a place to sit
Was not an easy "cinch";
As not a person in the car
Would budge a single inch.

But when a handsome, stylish girl
Came tripping down the aisle,
She got from ev'ry trav'ling man
A nice "free gratis" smile.

One big fat fellow raised his hat
And offered half his seat,
Which she refused politely, while
She kept on looking sweet.

A younger fellow, down the aisle,
Thought his luck he would try;
But when he offered her a seat,
She quickly passed him by.

A grocery agent next arose
And said, "I don't expect
You'll sit with me, but here's a seat,
I hope you'll not object?"

She sweetly smiled and thanked them all,
And looked so neat and prim;
At last she said: "My husband's here;
I think I'll sit with him."

WHY DON'T YOU SING?

WHEN ev'rything seems going wrong,
And for good times you've waited long,
If you have ever learned a song,
 Why don't you sing?

When some adversity you've met,
Expected order failed to get,
Instead of sitting down to fret,
 Why don't you sing?

When cash on hand is getting low,
And goes out fast and comes in slow,
If you'd forgetful be of woe,
 Why don't you sing?

When your best girl has turned you down,
Instead of wearing 'round a frown,
So all will know it in the town,
 Why don't you sing?

When you are fishing in a brook,
And all fish bite your neighbor's hook,
Don't let him see your worried look,
 Why don't you sing?

In fact, when ev'rything goes bad,
If you would make the devil mad,
And make him think you're feeling glad,
 Why don't you sing?

When wintry days are cold and bleak,
And you are sick, and sore, and weak,
So hoarse, you cannot sing nor speak,—
 Whistle.

FREEVILLE

My pa he is a trav'ling man ;
Pa goes most everywhere ;
And sometimes, too, my pa comes home
When he's the time to spare.
One time when pa came home he brought
A very pretty cane,
He'd whittled out at Freeville while
He waited for the train.

My pa he's got a great big book,
All written through and through,
With prices in of everything
He sells, both old and new.
Pa said, in writing up that book,
He nearly wrecked his brains ;
Pa did it all at Freeville, while
He waited for the trains.

My ma and pa played cards last night,
And my pa played so well,
That ma says : — " You've been practicing,
You'll surely have to tell
Where you acquired such skill at cards,
Of course you will explain."
Pa says : " 'Twas down at Freeville,
While I waited for the train."

My pa he wrote a funny book,
He called it " Trav'lers' Hash ";
Ma read it and she said, " You ought
To call it 'Agents' Trash.' "
Ma said: " In writing up that book,
You've taken lots of pains."
Pa wrote it all at Freeville,
While he waited for the trains.

Last week, when pa came home, you bet
Us children all were " skeered ";
We didn't know our pa because
Pa wore a great long beard.
Pa says to ma: " Now, don't get mad,
Nor think I've gone insane,
My whiskers grew at Freeville, while
I waited for the train."

KANONA AND PRATTSBURG

A HALF a dozen trav'ling men,
On Washington's birthday,
Said good-bye to Kanona, and
For Prattsburg moved away;
The walking was so very bad,
They couldn't stand the strain,
And so they did the next best thing —
They took a Prattsburg train.

It was an interesting sight
To see that faithful crew
Make up the train for Prattsburg,
While the moments swiftly flew.
'Twas due to leave at 3.15,
But here I'd like to state,
When it was ready for a start
'Twas fifty minutes late.

There were box cars and flat cars, too,
And cars of every kind;
The freight cars they were all ahead,
The passenger behind;
The engine made an awful fuss
To draw the train along,
We feared 'twould "bust its biler,"
'Cause it wasn't very strong.

It drew the train quite fast at first,
 Displaying lots of power;
We hoped to make that Prattsburg run
 In about a half an hour.
But soon it settled to a pace
 No faster than a walk;
And once or twice it acted queer,
 We feared 'twas going to balk.

Then suddenly 'twould gather strength,
 And up the grade would climb;
But when it had to whistle,
 It would stop most every time;
For when it to a crossing came,
 Where whistle had to blow,
It took its strength for whistling,
 So it left no power to go.

That Prattsburg engine surely
 Kept us guessing all the time;
And that is why I tho't to try
 To write its pranks in rhyme;
It forward went and backward, too,
 And acted like a clown;
Then once or twice it stopped quite short
 And jumped right up and down.

The grinding of those air-brakes
Kept the train in constant quiver ;
Cold chills ran up and down our spines,
And caused us each to shiver ;
There never was a broncho
Could perform so many feats ;
We got so interested, that
We couldn't keep our seats.

Our tickets all were limited,
So 'twas our great desire
To reach our destination
Ere our tickets should expire.
We got quite tired and hungry, too,
Yet we were all alive,
When we arrived at Prattsburg
Fifteen minutes after five.

GRIN AND BEAR IT

You enter rear of day coach,
You settle in a seat
Beside a handsome bonnet,
And figure that's complete.
Her ugly face she turns you,
Quite willing you should share it;
All other seats are taken,
You'll have to "grin and bear it."

THE CONDUCTOR

“ WHO is that handsome fellow, pa,
With shining buttons on his clothes?
See! Now he’s walking down the aisle,
Who can he be, do you suppose? ”

“ Why, that’s the train conductor, child,
He travels o’er the road each day;
How lonely his poor wife must be,
And children, too, when he’s away.”

“ Now, what’s a train conductor, pa?
Does he go always on the train?
Does he conduct the train away,
And then conduct it back again? ”

“ His business is to gather fares,
And keep good order on the car;
And try and make things pleasant, too,
For those who have to travel far.”

“ Who is that handsome lady, pa?
The ticket man just turned her seat.
Is that the ticket-puncher’s wife?
She’s looking at him pretty sweet.”

“ Such questions, son, you should not ask,
I’ve just been saying, don’t you know,
He must be nice to everyone
Who tiresome journeys have to go.”

“ But, pa, that other lady there,
Tho’ homely, she is not to blame;
Why don’t he fix a seat for her?
Perhaps he doesn’t know her name.”

“ Such questions, boy, will drive me wild;
You are the trial of my life.
That homely one, for aught I know,
May be the train conductor’s wife.”

“ Pa, do conductors work quite hard,
Or do they have an easy task?
How will I know if you refuse
To answer questions which I ask?”

“ Yes, lad, conductors do work hard;
They’ve troubles daily by the score;
From early morn till night, it seems
Conductor’s work is never o’er.”

“ Pa, if a fellow on the train
Should e’er refuse to pay his fare,
And call the ticket-puncher names,
Do you believe that he would swear? ”

“ My son, conductors seldom swear ;
Of this I'm quite well satisfied,
Whatever happens, this is clear,
Conductors' conduct is their pride.”

“ Pa, when a ticket-puncher dies,
Where do you think that he will go?
Will he go up above the skies ;
Or do they all go down below ? ”

“ O, cease such foolish questions, child,
There are some things your dad don't know ;
But if they all have boys like mine
They'll go insane, that's what they'll do.”

TROUTING

IN summer time,
By cooling stream,
That clambers down
The deep ravine,
Through woodland shadows,
Fain would I
Be there,
My fishing skill to try.
I think I am as happy there
As tho' I were a millionaire.

The leaves stir softly
With the breeze,
The sunshine shimmers
Thro' the trees;
While wild birds flit
On joyous wing,
And thrill me
With the songs they sing.
Such joys as these may well compare
With those of any millionaire.

Through bush and brake
I cautious tread,
To reach the quiet
Pool ahead,
Where lies a trout.

My flies I cast,—
A splash!
And I have hooked him fast.
Exchange such pleasures? I'd not dare,
Simply to be a millionaire.

How rapidly sinks
Yonder sun;
And this day's outing
Nearly done.
As home I go,
How proud I feel
To know I have
A well-filled creel;
With wife and children waiting there,
I'm proud as any millionaire.

IF

IF trains all ran on schedule time,
'Twould fewer salesmen take
To work the towns that now require
So many men to make.

If buyers always were at home,
With wants all written down,
The orders might be taken quick
In each small country town.

If country roads were always good,
And no deep mud or snow,
It would not take three weary hours
Six tedious miles to go.

If some branch railroads, that I know,
Would run two trains a day,
By doubling back perhaps I'd make
That territory pay.

Could I supply all wants entire
For goods within my line,
And drive all competition out,
That surely would be fine.

But since I can't sell all the goods,
When each day's work is o'er,
I'll hope that I have sold my share
And just a little more.

THE HAPPY TRAV'LING MAN

HERE's to the happy trav'ling man,
Who never wears a frown ;
Who's not puffed up when sales are good,
Nor soured when he's turned down.

He always wears a pleasant smile,
However slow his trade ;
May such as he successful be,
Their shadows never fade.

No matter what the weather is,
In sunshine, snow, or rain,
He makes the best of everything
And never will complain.

He's glad to be alive and well,
With appetite that's good,
So he may earn his family
Sufficient clothes and food.

For him the birds sing sweetest songs,
Wild flowers rare perfume yield ;
Rare pictures nature paints for him
In forest, stream, and field.

No day is ever long enough,
Time goes too quickly by ;
He's happy from the time he's born
Until he comes to die.

And when he puts his gripsack down
And leaves this world of care,
With all the blest in Heaven above,
May he be happy there.

THE FAULTFINDER

No doubt, each salesman on the road
Has met this trav'ling man,
But so you'll know him, let me here
Describe him if I can.

He finds fault ere he's out of bed,
His room is never right;
His cuffs not laundered properly,
His collar much too tight.

His shoes are bound to hurt his feet,
And ev'rything goes wrong;
His shoestrings are "too cussed short,"
His necktie much too long.

He does not like the dining girl
Who brings his meals to him;
She's apt to be too stout or thin,
Too careless or too prim.

The eggs are never done just right,
His meat is always wrong;
His coffee often is too weak,
His onions oft too strong.

If he, perchance, some day shall reach
That land of pure delight,
We hope he'll find in Heaven above
That everything's just right.

But should he find the other place,
We would not think it strange,
He's had so much of Hades here,
He would not mind the change.

THE BALD-HEADED MAN

HERE's to the man,
 May he e'er be well fed,
Whose hair is all gone from
 The top of his head.
In this little jingle,
 I'll see if I can
Make cheerful and happy
 The bald-headed man.

In summer, in winter,
 In rain, or in snow,
His pate keeps ashining
 Where'er he may go.
He's always good natured,
 And pleasant, and kind;
As good a companion
 As oft you will find.

He's fond of good stories,
 And likes a new joke;
Is seldom a boozier,
 But often will smoke;
Admires all nice women,
 Is not often lazy;
And no man bald-headed
 Is apt to go crazy.

Statistics will prove it,
Deny, if you dare,
That lunatics often
Have good heads of hair.
I've also observed,
Since I left district school,
A bald-headed man
Is quite seldom a fool.

Whether baldness and brains
Go together, or not,
Surely bald men are using
What brains they have got.
When bald-headed men
To the theater go,
They all like to sit
In the "bald-headed row."

Now, just for one moment,
I'll call your attention
To noted bald-heads, but
Their names I'll not mention.
One very rich man,
Who is known near and far,
His head shines as if oiled;
Guess his name? "J. D. R."

For a speech after dinner
You all will agree,
Tho' a bald-headed man,
None can equal "C. D."
Philosophers, statesmen,
Inventors and such,
Have no hair on their heads,
Or at least have not much.

So don't be discouraged
My bald-headed friend,
Perhaps on your baldness
Your future depends;
And when you sit down
In a barber's big chair,
Don't let him suggest
Anything for your hair.

For after he's shaved you,
He may have a notion
And strongly insist, that
You try his hair lotion.
If your whiskers are turning,
He'll want you to try
Just one application
Of his whisker dye.

All this as you sit there
Appears very funny;
He's onto his job,
And he's after your money;
Just bid him put tonics
All back on the shelf,
And let him experiment
First on himself.

Just tell him that baldness
Denotes a smart man;
And you want to get there
As fast as you can.
And now I've effused
Till I think I should stop;
For my hair I perceive
Is quite thin at the top.

I WONDER IF IT'S SO

It is good salesmanship, some say
 (Tho' all are not agreed),
To sell a merchant many things
 His bus'ness does not need.
They say, "No matter if you know
 The goods will move quite slow,
It's salesmanship to load him up."
 I wonder if it's so?

Your customer has capital,
 Quite limited, 'tis true;
And if he turns it oft enough,
 Some bus'ness he may do.
But "never mind," the salesman says,
 "His credit's good, I know;
It's bus'ness, so I'll load him up."
 I wonder if it's so?

Because a man's an easy mark,
 Is that good reason why
One should insist in selling him
 Things he should never buy?
His stock grows larger ev'ry day,
 And payments get more slow;
Some say the agents are at fault,
 I wonder if it's so?

One time, there was a trav'ling man
Who'd long been on the road;
And many merchants in that man
Great confidence bestowed.
Some said, "He is no salesman, sure,
His trade will never grow;
An order taker cuts no ice."
I wonder if it's so?

But still this faithful trav'ling man
Kept busy in the game;
Altho' not called a salesman, he
Took orders just the same.
His bus'ness grew from year to year,
And made a splendid show,
With scarcely e'er a poor account.
I know this to be so.

So, brother agent on the road,
Don't let it worry you
To hear a so-called hustler brag,
And tell what he can do.
Some day we'll miss him; where he is,
His firm may never know;
Perhaps he'll leave some unpaid bills.
We hope it won't be so.

HIS LEVEL BEST

To be successful on the road,
Each trav'ling man should know,
It takes a lot of energy
To make his bus'ness go;
Whate'er the territory be,
North, south, or east, or west,
There'll come no failure to the man
Who does his level best.

When times are hard and money scarce,
And trade is moving slow,
And pessimists on ev'ry hand
Predicting times of woe,
The optimistic trav'ling man
Will always stand the test:
It's up to him to talk good times,
And do his level best.

Then, brother salesman on the road,
'Tis plain for us to see,
Whatever's good for others, sure
Is good for you and me;
That city, town, and country, may
With happiness be blest,
Ambassadors of commerce, we
Will do our level best.

THE FARMER SALESMAN

WELL, wife, I'm cumin hum next week,
An' I am proude ter say
Thet farmin's gud enuf fur me,
I'm cumin hum ter stay.

How I alloud thet slipry guy
To thus hornswoggel me
Is more then I kin komprehend,
In this yu wil agree.

The proffit I heve maid wunt haff
Pay up mi rode expens ;
But I hev lurned a gosh durned lot
A sellin patent fense.

I thot I wuz the only wun,
But, gudnes, I'll be blood,
I've met ten thousand, moar or les,
While travlen on the roade.

Sum, sellin things legittymait,
Call on the best uv traide ;
An sum sel things the kussedest
Thet ever yit wuz maide.

The biznis bein nu tu me,
I thot I'd like to no
How uther fellers on the roade
Can maik thayre biznis go.

Uv awl the things thees travlen men
Aire husseld out tu sel
Upon the rode frum da to da
I kant begin to tel.

A lot uv them sel groceriz,
An offen see thaire traid;
Thayre sallerys aire nice an fat
An awl expences paide.

The dri gudz men, with grate big trunks
With samples packt galoare,
Hev gudz in them enuf to stock
Most enny countrie stoare.

Kummishun merchants on the roade,
Men selling skule supplies;
The phosphait men yu'll allus kno,
Thaire bisnis never lize.

Then thare's a class uv trav'len men
Whitch tu the druggest sel
The things tu maik wel peepul sick
And maik sick peepul wel.

But uv awl sailsmen on the rode
Thet waulk or ride in keers,
The wonz whitch aire most numrous
Aire those what sel seegars.

Then thairs a happy feller, tu,
That offen leeds the van,
An thets the geniel smilin fase
Uv the insurranse man.

The furnytüre an carpet men
Aire allus feelin fine,
When gudz aire movin in the spring
About e hous-cleening tyme.

I saw wun feller sellin whips
An sadellery supplize,
Anuther feller woodin laigs,
Anuther wun glas ize.

Tipe righter sailsmen on the roade,
Sum sellin ladiz skurtz,
Wun feller peddlin chewin gum,
Anuther wun mens shurtz.

Soliciters fer plummin gudz,
Newspaper men galore,
An bakin powdre men yu'll see
In almost ev'ry stoare.

Book agunts upon evry hand,
Macheenery men by skoars,
Men sellin lightnin rods an plaits
Tu put upon frunt doars.

Wun feller hed a worrid look,
I axed him, "Why so sad?"
He said— "My biznis, frend, is sutch
I'm allus feelin bad."

"I'm sellin koffins, kaskits, shrouds,
Need any, let me ask,
Tu sel sutch gudz in helthie tymes
Is no ded eezy taske."

Then, thaires the toom-stun man don't wait
Till evry boddys ded,
But deels in futcherz, les perchans,
Sum wun'll git ahed.

He heers uv sum wun indeesposed,
An strateway yu wil see
Him hussel thaire 'en close a deel
With the hull — family.

Men sellin feeshin tackul, tu,
An what du yu suppoase,
I met wun feller sellin them aire
Meddycated hoes.

Seemed quite a desent feller, but
I'll bet my weaks expens,
He's wuss than him what bunkoed me
With thet gosh durned ole fense.

He sed those meddycated hoes
Wud remmeddy awl ills,
Kur korns an bunyans, hoopin koff,
An drive awa the chilz.

He sed so much in prase uv them,
A feller standen bye,
Sed ef theyd cure hiz rumatizz
A paire uv them he'd trye.

This feller he wuz mitey slick,
While I wuz standin thaire,
I bet ef he desposed uv wun,
He soald a hunderd pare.

The man what sells konfections,
Him were allus glad tu meet,
An thets bekus hiz biznis
Maiks his deespysitun sweet.

But talkin with a pikul man
Fer jest a haff an houre,
Will giv yu indegestun, shure,
His biznis is so soure.

Next cums the clothin man along,
Uv Izreelytish faime,
When clothin' deels aire on yu'll find
Thet Issack's in the gaime.

I met wun feller on the roade
Employed by the Beef Trust,
He drause his pay most evry dae
Fer feare hiz furm will busst.

Wun feller sellin beer and ails,
He looks jest like a cop,
It maide me smyle tu heere him sae,
"I nevur taik a drop."

But uv awl men what tramp the rode
Perhaps nun wil compaire,
For honer an sobryety,
With those what sel hardwear.

Sum men sel shues from factory,
An sum frum jobbers stock;
Electrick men yu must not tuch,
Fer feare yu'll get a shock.

Sum men go out upon the roade
Not nearly gudz tu sel,
But by up taller, hides, and hornz,
An shepe peltz tu az wel.

The instrumentz uv musick
Allus finde a ready saile,
Piannys in moast evry plaice,
Frum meeting house tu jale.

Hats, caps, an habbydashery,
In awl the latist stiles,
Tu make gud sails this travlin man
Each da goze manny miles.

Sum men aire out fur crockery,
An sum wall paper sel,
Thaire's not suffysient time jest now
Tu tuch these lines up wel.

Fish-mungers also on the roade
Look after biznis sharpe,
They sel awl kinds within thayre lines,
From byvalvs down tu karp.

The slippry man who sels the oils,
To lubrycait or burn,
Is helpin oute this world, no dout,
Upon its axiss turn.

I met wun handsum feller
What was sellin millinery,
I tried tu talk with him, but
He wuz hard 'o hearin, very.

He sed, " Shud hard tymes lose my job,
Twud be tu me lik Haides,
I'd ruther wurk fer nuthin, fur
I so admire the ladys."

But he what deels in rode masheens,
Regardless uv the wether,
Will be thaire when the new town boarde
Sees fit tu git together.

He is the slickest guy uv awl,
Yu ort tu se that sinner,
Taik oute the supervizer bunch
And buy em a big dinner.

The way he entertanes those men
In tones perlite an meller,
With plans wel laid the deel iz maide,
Then he's a happy feller.

* * * * *

Big men oft deal in little things,
Small men big deals control,
Soft men quite often have hard jobs,
Hard men oft sell soft coal.

Bald men sell wigs upon the road,
Blind men oft sell glass eyes;
While toothless men are selling teeth,
And gray-haired men, hair-dyes.

Just one word more — the trav'ling man,
I'll say it if I dare,
With any other class of men
I think will well compare.

There are some rascals on the road,
Some rogues in ev'ry trade;
Some trav'ling salesmen are all right,
The best men ever made.

Some anxious are for a square deal,
Some only out for pelf;
I'll take my med'cine with the rest,
For I am one myself.

HAMMONDSPORT

TRIP to Bath,
Short duration ;
This the path
For vacation.
Keuka Lake,
Bathing, fishing ;
Pretty girls,
Flirting, wishing
Steamboat ride ;
Sailing, rowing,
How we glide !
Cheeks a glowing.
Autumn days,
Vineyards, peaches,
Bluffs, and bays ;
Sandy beaches.
Keuka trout ;
Ever tried them ?
Best on earth,
When you've fried them.

ADDISON

RAILROAD Erie,
Station dreary,
Salesman weary;
Bridge o'er river,
Winter, shiver;
Tavern nearing,
Supper cheering;
Gas ignited,
Town poor lighted;
Table seating,
Hungry, eating;
Business over,
Resting, clover;
Now beginning
Yarns a spinning;
Smoking, gushing,
Partridge flushing;
Tales conflicting,
Contradicting;
No denying,
Someone's lying.

THE GOOD SALESMAN

HE's not the man who always sells
More goods than all the rest,
For there are things besides his sales
By which his worth to test.
To sell for house that's popular,
Where shipping points are good,
Don't take the smartest man on earth,—
Most anybody could.

But take the other fellow's place,
Who's stationed far away,
And sells o'er one-horse railroad lines
That run two trains a day;
Where near-by firms deliver goods
In three days or in four;
While shipments coming from his firm
Require a week or more.

Expenses, too, for livery,
To drive o'er hills and dales,
Will take a lot of profits
From his hard-earned meager sales;
And freight rates, too, are less than half
From where they get supplies,
And he is under strictest rules
No freights to equalize.

His firm will doubtless say to him,
 “ This fact must be impressed:
That we can sell them goods, you know,
 Much cheaper than the rest.”
If he can prove to them this fact,
 Some bus’ness he may do ;
But here’s an argument they’ll give,
 I’ve heard it ; haven’t you ?

Quite oft the merchant says like this :
 “ Your house is all O. K.,
And I’d be glad to deal with you,
 But you’re too far away ;
And even if I knew I’d save
 A little on the cost
Of goods I buy, ’twould not offset
 The sales that would be lost

“ In waiting for the goods that are
 A week upon the way,
When I can buy in —————
 And get them here next day.”
But if this fellow has the tact
 And pluck so he’ll endure,
And keeps increasing his small trade,
 He’ll be a hero, sure.

Just one thing more I wish to say,
A salesman's seldom paid
According to the work he does,
Or efforts he has made.
The biggest salaries often go
Where efforts are quite small;
Now, to such lucky ones I say,
"You've got a 'cinch,' that's all."

THE SMOKING CAR

THE trav'ling man who likes to smoke
If he's to travel far,
Will best enjoy his railroad trip
Within the smoking car.

A morning paper first he buys,
Then lights a choice cigar,
And seats himself with quiet grace
Within the smoking car.

But aggregated filth, no doubt,
Will oft one's pleasure mar,
When spitting's not prohibited
Within the smoking car.

We've often heard men argue creeds,
On sin wage mighty war,
While spitting plug tobacco juice
Within the smoking car.

They claim they're ticketed for heaven,
We fear they won't get far,
Until they learn to be more neat
Within the smoking car.

TO A SONG SPARROW

FROM top of wayside bush
Thou sendest afloat
Music that seemest would'st burst
Thy little throat.
However dark or cloudy be the day,
Heavenward thou sendest happy roundelay :
Till I acknowledge,
Ere thy song has ceased,
Mankind, of all God's creatures
Praises least.

“ NIT ”

I, WITH my satchel in my hand
And order blanks galore,
As trav'ling salesman started out
To go from store to store,
And capture orders for my firm.
It took a lot of grit,
For where one merchant bought of me
A dozen answered “ Nit.”

One dealer said, “ No trav'ling man
I've seen for many a day ;
I have a monstrous order here
'Twill take your breath away.”
And such an order as he gave,
I nearly had a fit.
Now, am I telling you the truth?
My conscience answers “ Nit.”

STOP DREADING IT

IF there's a task you should perform
Don't wait another minute,
You never can complete a job
Unless you first begin it.
No matter how unpleasant 'tis
From any point you view it ;
You'd better get a move on you,
Stop dreading it, and do it.

Perhaps you have a customer
Of whom your firm's demanding
The settlement of an account
That's been a long time standing ;
Just summon all the tact you have,
'Twill useless be to sue it,
Go quickly and collect the bill,
Stop dreading it, and do it.

If, when your dinner's brought to you,
This need not be surprising,
Sometimes, at least, to realize
There's nothing appetizing ;
The beefsteak may be pretty tough,
You fear you cannot chew it,
Don't bring reproach upon our craft,
Stop dreading it, and do it.

If you're in love with some fair maid,
And anxious are to win her ;
And thoughts of her cause you to lose
Your appetite for dinner ;
If you should wed and settle down,
I'm sure you'd never rue it ;
Brace up and ask her right away.
Stop dreading it, and do it.

THE TROLLEY RIDE

ALTHO' you may travel for years,
You'll not know
Half the pleasure of travel,
If you never go
Up the hill on the trolley,
I'll not tell you where,
For five cents' worth of ride
You must pay ten cents fare.
Imagine some eve, at the foot
Of the hill,
You wait there, and wait there,
And wait there, until,
All worn out and weary
Of body and brain,
You fear a late trolley will
Miss your home train ;
But just as you're ready
To give up the deal,
The car comes along and how
Happy you feel.
And how gladly you hasten and
Scramble inside,
To secure a good seat and enjoy
The fine ride.
But what disappointment is yours
When you know
It will seat only thirty, with
Sixty to go.

A score or more stand holding on
To the straps,
While at least half as many are
Sitting in laps.
You fear the conductor can
Never get through
Such a jam, to collect all the
Fares that are due;
But whether you're standing, or
Whether you sit,
Will he miss any fares? Well, I
Rather guess "Nit."
You see him emerging to
Gather the toll,
And he looks like a rat coming
Out of a hole;
He wriggles and pushes, and crowds
His way through,
As an honest man should, to collect
All that's due.
The car gives a lurch, for a
Moment, perhaps,
Nearly ev'ryone's seated, few hold
To the straps.
A big burly fellow, of nothing
Afraid,
Sits down in the lap of a timid
Old maid.

And a spinster, while standing
A moment before,
Now falls on the preacher who
Sits near the door.
As if to add pain to this long
List of woes,
Each passenger treads on another
One's toes.
The hill is so steep, and we so
Often stop,
We fear we will never arrive
At the top.
That we'll miss our train there
Seems now little doubt,
For all of a sudden the power
Has played out.
Some now take their baggage
Declaring to walk,
And they'll not ride again on a
Car that will balk.
They climb the hill swiftly till
All out of breath,
They fear the excitement may
Cause them their death.
But the trolley car losing so much
Of its load.
Soon catches its breath and moves
On up the road;

And arrives at the station exactly
In time
To connect with the train, which
Is surely quite fine.
But those who have walked, I am
Sorry to say,
Will have to stay over till some
Other day.

WINTER IN CORTLAND

OF all the places on this earth
This side the arctic zone,
The place that's labeled Cortland
Is the coldest spot we've known.

Last night the Cortland mercury
Took quite a sudden drop ;
It went to twenty-six below
And then refused to stop.

The folks we meet upon the street,
Young, middle aged, and old,
Alike exclaim, with shiv'ring frame,
" Gee Whizz ! but ain't it cold ? "

Around some Cortland cottages
The snow is piled so high,
The occupants all go up-stairs
To watch the teams go by.

Where are the joyous summer birds
That used to fly around ?
They've all gone south, the hop-toad, too,
Is buried in the ground.

The woodchuck now no longer feeds
On grass and juicy herb,
His hibernating sleep is sweet,
With nothing to disturb.

O! won't the winter e'er be o'er?
And shall we ne'er have spring?
When will the ground hogs crawl about,
And birds begin to sing?

We're longing for the soft spring breeze,
To hear the robin's song;
It seems the spring-time ne'er before
Has tarried half so long.

We long to see the tender grass
The earth worms crawl about,
And take our fishing rods again
And angle for brook trout.

We want to smell the violets' breath,
To pluck the daffodil,
And drink from purest spring, that feeds
The crystal hill-side rill.

Impatiently we wait for thee,
So hasten, gentle spring,
We'll take the bitter with the sweet,
Whatever you may bring.

We want a change ; most anything
Will be to us a treat ;
For we are sick and tired of frost,
And cold, and snow, and sleet.

Mosquitos, wasps, and bumblebees
Will be a welcome sight ;
And e'en a yellow jacket's sting
Will thrill us with delight.

Then, come hot days with thunder storms,
Ice cream and soda fizz ;
When we can fan ourselves and say,
“ Great Scott ! ” how hot it is ! ”

UMBRELLAS

I'LL ask you this question
Before I begin:
Is stealing umbrellas
Considered a sin?

I wish to repeat it,
Here at the beginning,
Is "swiping" umbrellas
Considered as sinning?

The reason I ask is,
I've known such good fellows
Who've never returned
Any borrowed umbrellas.

When you go a shopping,
And leave your purse 'round,
You may feel very sure
It will never be found.

You may wager it's stolen,
Expecting to win it;
And soon it's returned you
With all the cash in it.

And why any person
Who'll never steal money,
Will "swipe" an umbrella
Appears very funny.

I once dreamed a dream,
Which I wish to relate:
'Twas the great Judgment Day;
Peter stood at the gate.

I noticed that few, who
For entrance applied,
Were allowed to pass through;
Many folks were denied.

I saw one approaching
I'd long known on earth,
And he was considered
A man of rare worth.

His record was perfect;
I knew of no sin
That would bar for one moment
His chance to pass in.

I saw good St. Peter
My aged friend greeting,
And noted how cordial
And friendly the meeting.

He welcomed him gladly,
And flung wide the gate,
And wondered this fellow
Should e'en hesitate.

Then Peter says kindly,
"Pass over the portal,
And revel in joys and
In pleasures immortal."

To this my friend answered:
"I've tried to live humble,
And only just once from
The path did I stumble.

"I've been a bank president,
Town Supervisor,
And drank nothing stronger
Than Moxie or Geyser.

"I've tried to live honest
And upright, and true;
And paid everybody
Each cent that was due.

"And yet I'm unworthy
To sing the glad song,
For on one occasion
I did a great wrong.

“ My conscience has given me
No comfort at all,
Since I took that umbrella
From out the town hall.”

“ Just pass this man in,”
Good St. Peter replied,
“ Or we’ll not get enough
For a quorum inside.”

THE UMBRELLA TEST

IN judging a person insane, here's a test,
Which seems quite ridiculous, must be confessed :
If you'd ascertain if a man's mind is right,
Just leave him alone, an umbrella in sight ;
And then if he takes it, the fact will be plain,
That no judge or jury will call him insane ;
But if he don't " swipe " it, the jury may find
That either he's crazy or losing his mind.

KATE

WHEN I arrive at the hotel,
Cold, hungry, tired, and late,
Who brings my meal with smiling face?
Why, don't you know? it's Kate.

And when I'm seated down to eat,
I don't have long to wait,
Somebody knows I'm hungry, and
That somebody is Kate.

What dining girl in this broad land
Would e'er refill my plate
With food she knows I like so well?
None other would, but Kate.

Who says to me, " Do have some more !
This pumpkin pie is great !
Just let me bring another piece."
The darling girl! 'tis Kate.

Whose fame has spread throughout the land
To almost every State?
She calls the trav'ling men " My boys ; "
The boys all call her " Kate."

Some day upon each plate a tear
Will fall as we relate,
And think of all her kindly ways
We'll miss her so ; our Kate.

But trav'ling men are not all bad
Inside the pearly gate
May many trav'ling men be found,
To greet our old friend Kate.

And sitting at Heaven's banquet feast,
'Twill be a happy fate,
To hear a voice — “ Do have some more,”
And recognize it's Kate.

THE HAMMOCK DREAM

I, IN my hammock dreamed a dream,
And in my dream methought
That Love had conquered all the world,
And wondrous changes wrought.

Where quarrels once had held control,
And friends been parted long,
Love reunited them and filled
Their hearts with happy song.

All selfishness was done away,
For each one understood
The happiness that comes to one,
From simply being good.

I saw the doors thrown open wide
To palace grand and fair;
Surprised was I to see the kinds
Of people flocking there.

A banquet feast was spread for all —
The poor, the halt, and blind;
For they who gave the feast had learned
The joy of being kind.

At many an humble cottage door
Grand automobiles came,
Bringing their gifts of helpful things
To poor, and sick, and lame.

To some fine auto rides were given,
Not asking any fee,
For they believed that "Inasmuch,
Ye've done it unto me."

O'er many a church door I beheld,
In letters bold and clear,
"All seats are free to rich and poor,
Come in and worship here."

I ventured in, and there I heard
Proclaimed in fearless tongue,
The simple gospel truth revealed
Alike to old and young.

And all were welcomed equally,
The rich and poor alike;
Both he who came by auto-car
And he who rode a bike.

The preacher did not try to preach
Theology, nor creeds;
He said that "Mercy, love, and truth
Is what this sad world needs."

In politics there was a change
To quite a different plan;
A man did not for office seek,
The people sought the man.

In fact, it seemed for ev'ryone
The promised time had come;
And in my joy I cried —“ Hurrah
For the Millenium! ”

When I discovered, to my shame,
Things are not what they seem;
The hammock broke and I fell out,
Awaking from my dream.

SO TIRED

I'M tired of trav'ling on the trains ;
It surely is no joke
To breathe the coal gas, fill your eyes
With cinders, dirt, and smoke.

I'm tired of scrambling for a seat
On any first-class train ;
To get one, oft I have to fight
With all my might and main.

I'm tired of eating at hotels,
Altho' the board is good ;
I'd much prefer to be at home,
And eat there if I could.

I'm tired of waiting for the trains
That often are so late,
That I can't see my customers
On any certain date.

I'm tired for lack of proper sleep,
Tired catching midnight trains ;
Tired driving out in summer's heat,
Through mud and dust and rains.

Tired paying out so much good cash
For shines and barbers' bills ;
Tired eating luncheons late at night,
Tired taking headache pills.

Tired rising often in the night
From off my peaceful bed,
To chase mosquitoes from the room,
I wish they all were dead !

Tired of the flies that bother
When I write or read or eat ;
Tired of the corns and bunions, too,
That grow upon my feet.

Tired of the things that pester me
On this terrestrial ball ;
I'll take a short vacation, for
I'm simply tired, that's all.

THE CRIPPLE

IN humble home without complaint,
Through bright or cloudy day,
He sits and works, or reads and thinks,
To while the hours away.

He's not entirely helpless, yet
With body racked with pain,
He can but feebly go about
By aid of crutch and cane.

A picture mem'ry paints for him
Of happy days of yore,
When with his gay companions oft
He roamed the woodlands o'er.

And little thought of coming ills,
So happy, gay, and free;
He loved the fields, the woods, and hills —
A child of nature, he.

And oft looked forward, when a child,
With many an eager plan,
Thinking of great things he would do
When he became a man.

But now those early dreams of his
Lie buried in the past ;
Alas ! they were too sweet to live,
Too bright were they to last.

Yet patiently he lives each day
Without a murm'ring sigh,
And any task he can perform
He's always glad to try.

He loves each little blade of grass
And ev'ry flower that grows,
And on each tiny living thing
Much tenderness bestows.

Sometime I'm sure he'll happy be,
With body sound and strong ;
He'll walk the streets of Paradise
And sing the " Glory Song."

And there among the happy throng,
He'll welcomed be, I know ;
With boundless mercy shown to him
Who mercy showed below.

Sometimes we think our lot is hard,
And wish our toils were o'er ;
Forgetting poor unfortunates
Who live so near our door.

Let each be ready, some kind word
Or deed to such to give;
If we can helpful be to some,
'Twill be worth while to live.

REQUISITES OF A TRAV'LING MAN

SOMETIMES I hear a person say
Like this: "One thing is true;
The trav'ling man has got a 'cinch,'
He don't have much to do
But sit around from morn till night,
And when he hungry feels,
The biggest job he has each day,
Is eating three square meals;
His firm pays all his road expense,
He rides in palace cars,
And puts up at the swell hotels,
And smokes the best cigars."

That I may disillusion such,
And free them from mistake,
With reference to the trav'ling man,
Some statements I will make.
The qualities that go to make
The real successful man
Upon the road, are numerous;
I'll name some if I can.

First, he should have "the gift of gab"
That is, know how to talk;
Should have no tender feet, nor corns,
For much he'll have to walk.

His stomach should be very strong,
So he'll be always able
To eat whatever's brought to him
And placed upon the table.
His vision should not be the best,
Then he will not be looking
For flies, and hairs, and water bugs,
Oft found in first-class cooking.

A trav'ling man should have sound teeth,
That match when shut together,
So he can chew a piece of meat
Much tougher than sole leather.
A natural trav'ler he should be,
And some firms are demanding
One who can stand on crowded cars
And take a nap while standing.

Immune this trav'ling man should be,
Who with contagion mingles,
To all diseases known to man,
From whooping cough to shingles;
His nerves should be so well controlled,
Tho' noise like thousand thunders
Should burst upon the midnight air,
'Twill not disturb his slumbers.
Both pluck and skill this man should have,
And here's a fact worth knowing,
Unless to these is added tact,
His bus'ness won't keep growing.

For instance, if his customer
Is fond of boats and sailing,
This trav'ling man to talk sailboats
Should never be found failing.
Another for that kind of sport
May have a strong aversion ;
And fishing be his chief delight,
His only one diversion.

With pride he tells the trav'ling man
How in the early summer,
He made a catch of trout so large
It nearly stumps the drummer,
Who's never caught a fish, 'tis true,
Quite large enough to mention ;
And yet he spins a dandy yarn,
And gets the man's attention.
Then when fish yarns enough are told,
The agent says, " I'm wishing
To land a handsome order now,
It's for your trade I'm fishing."

He gets the order, and, no doubt,
He fools himself believing
A trav'ling man is justified
In doing such deceiving.
Some merchants' hobbies are their stores,
Where always they are busy ;
They'll give their orders to the man
So quick, 'twill make him dizzy.

A trav'ling man should patience have,
For ne'er 'twill be expected,
A merchant just to favor him
Will see his trade neglected;
An agent also should belong
To ev'ry order going;
Fraternities play quite a part
And help a business showing.
Now, if you think that you possess
All these qualifications,
You need not wait, for such as you
Are lots of situations.

Apply to Brown, Smith, Jones & Co.,
It will not be surprising
If you are just the man they want,
For whom they're advertising.
Don't work too cheaply; here's a fact,
It won't take long to learn it;
You're worth 5,000 the first year,
Providing you can earn it.

THE CLOCK IN THE TOWER

As you walk down the street
Many people you meet,
 Some happy, some crusty and sour ;
Altho' faces may change,
One remains just the same,—
 It's the face of the clock in the tower.

It affords one delight,
Coming home late at night,
 Or, perhaps, in the wee morning hour,
To be able to say
To his friends the next day,
 “ It was ten by the clock in the tower.”

Like some people we know,
It quite often moves slow,
 Then again it starts up with great power ;
But you must not complain
Should you just miss your train,
 If you go by the clock in the tower.

THE FISHING TRIP

UPON the eve of July third,
In nineteen hundred eight,
Two trav'ling men a-fishing went —
They could no longer wait.

For many weeks this fishing trip
Had been their fondest dream;
They longed to angle for brook trout
In fair Otselic stream.

Frank says to Nick, " Let's start to-night,
For likelier than not,
We won't have any luck, unless
We're 'Johnnie on the spot.' "

So they at once did gather up,
Without a moment's wait,
Their wading boots, creels, hooks, and flies,
And rods, and lines, and bait.

A sixty minutes' railroad ride,
And then with journey done,
They landed where they hoped next day
To have a lot of fun.

Frank puts up at the one hotel,
Nick goes to stay with friends ;
Frank says, "At daylight we should start —
Success on this depends.

" Just come along at 4 A. M.,
You will not need to yell ;
You'll find me waiting for you there,
Outside the big hotel."

At 4 A. M. Nick came along,
'Twas scarcely morning light,
And anxiously he looked around,
There was no Frank in sight.

While Nick was waiting there outside,
And sorting up his flies,
Frank in his dreams was catching trout
Of most tremendous size.

Nick gets impatient, yet he waits
What seems like quite a while,
Then goes along the river bank
Three-quarters of a mile.

And very quickly he has caught
Three handsome speckled trout,
And just as Frank appears he pulls
Another fine one out.

Frank says, " The boys made so much noise,
And bonfires all the night
Disturbed me so I could not go
To sleep till near daylight.

" But now I'm here, 'twill be quite queer
If I don't catch my share."
He then cast in and with a grin
Pulled out a dandy there.

When they go in at breakfast time,
They are a little proud
To show the folks their morning catch
As they around them crowd.

And so all day, as best they may,
They try both bait and fly;
With splendid luck they celebrate
The Fourth day of July.

At night Frank says to Nick, " I've fished
In almost ev'ry clime;
This beats them all, we surely came
Just in the ' nick o' time.' "

Now reader, if you wish to try,
Your piscatorial skill
In fair Otselic, you perhaps
Your creel may quickly fill.

But then you know trout are quite queer,
So you should not feel blue,
If you should fish the whole day long
And catch but one or two.

A fellow fished this river once
From morning until night;
He said — “ I fished, and fished, and fished,
And never had a bite! ”

ELMIRA

AMONG the cities that I know
In grand old New York State,
There's one down in the southern tier
That's destined to be great.

Some brilliant men have added much
To this fair city's fame,
There's Beecher, Baxter, Clemens, then
We'll add Sloat Fassett's name.

I had a friend who longed to see
Its streets and buildings grand,
So he might make comparison
With others in the land.

So James Lang took this trip with me,
Because he longed to know,
As well as I, what chance there is
For this big town to grow.

We enter by the trolley car
Upon the street called Lake,
And when we come to Water Street
Some observations make.

Arriving there at Water Street,
The street cars always stop,
So tourists all may freely view
The Cottage Barber Shop.

Then passing on up Water Street,
We watch the shoppers throng,
While in the trolley car we sit
And smoothly glide along.

We're hungry, so we leave the car,
I think at Baldwin Street,
And travel round to try and find
A place where we may eat.

We enter next a restaurant,
And Jim says, "Just for fun,
I'm going to see if I can buy
Right here a 'hot cross bun.'"

The waiter says, "I'm sorry, sir,
We have no buns to-day;
But you can find, if you're inclined,
A Rath-bun 'cross the way."

'Twas daylight, so we failed to see
That grand electric sign;
And got switched off on State Street, where
We sought a place to dine.

Soon we beheld what looked to be
A big and grand hotel;
The landlord greeted us and asked,
“Is Mrs. James Lang well?”

Jim says, “It was not long ago
That she was feeling fine;
I hope my leaving her at home
Won’t Causer to decline.”

The pangs of hunger now appeased,
Together we agree,
That we will go on Main Street next
And see what we can see.

We reach the Erie crossing now,
And long we there remain,
Enjoying panoramic views
Of passing cattle trains.

We’d seen long railroad trains before,
But each of us declare
We’d never seen a train like this
That kept us standing there.

When the caboose appeared in view,
We heard somebody say,
“Look out! there comes another train
Down from the other way.”

I know an aged trav'ling man,
And often he complains,
How many busy years he's lost
In waiting for late trains.

Now, if Elmira he should make,
As some do ev'ry week,
I make no doubt he'd change his route
And other fields would seek.

For in this city he'd observe
How many times each day,
At crossing gates he'd have to wait
For trains to clear the way.

Once on a bitter wintry day,
At least, the story goes,
A trav'ling man while waiting there
Froze several of his toes.

Now I'd suggest the city build
A crossing high o'er head,
To prove she's healthy and alive,
So none will think her dead.

And even if a toll were charged,
I'd rather pay a dime,
Than waste so many hours each trip
Of my employer's time.

When we are safely o'er the track,
And both alive and well,
The "Alice Francis" next we see,
A temperance hotel.

The trolley car again we take,
That we may see the sights,
And pass the monument and parks,
As we go toward the "Heights."

The parks are fine in summer time,
And you will say so when
You visit Eldridge Park at night,
And also Rorick's Glen.

The churches and the schools are grand,
And it is only fair
To say with any in the land
They favorably compare.

Then there's that Institution great,
That's built to stand the storm,
A monument upon a height,
That advocates reform.

How long we stayed in this great town
I'll not attempt to say;
There were such great attractions there,
'Twas hard to get away.

We drank the Chemung nearly dry,
We dined on fish and fowl;
Went to the Mozart night and day,
And heard the "Growler" growl.

'Twould take too long to mention half
The wonders of this town,—
The early home of one who won
A humorist's renown.

"E're we depart," Jim says to me,
"I near forgot my plan
To call upon my cousin here,
Her name, Miss 'Della Vann.'"

Jim gets confused on Market Street,
I saw him, with a grin,
Go up the steps and smiling ask
"Is Miss 'Con-on-gue Inn?'"

When we left town, we both agreed
We'd visit next time when
She's reached the 50,000 mark,
In 1910.

VAN ETTEN

THE man who travels on the road
Puts up at some queer places,
Has many strange experiences,
And sees some curious faces ;
I've wondered oft where Zimmerman
Gets characters for sketchin' ;
But I don't wonder any more,
Since I stopped in Van Etten.

When I had found a lodging place,
I thought I'd write a letter ;
'Twas raining hard and wet outside,
Inside 'twas somewhat better.
A drunken man was quarrelsome,
And I did some regrettin',
I didn't like the looks of him,
That evening in Van Etten.

He said to me " Van Etten folks
Are tough and rugged, very ;
We'll have to kill a trav'ling man
To start a cemetery."
I said, " From out this town at once
I think I'll be a-gettin',
Or I'll be robbed and murdered, too,
Right here in this Van Etten."

The bus'ness portion of this town
Is very nearly level,
The corners not exactly square,
They're on a sort of bevel;
So if you walk direct across
The street, you'll be a bettin'
It's farther than to go around
By sidewalk, in Van Etten.

Van Etten has a big town clock
That's always kept a beating,
It's high up in the Banfield tower
And marks the moments fleeting.
Conductors on the Lehigh trains,
No doubt, are often settin'
Their watches by that old town clock,
As they fly through Van Etten.

Within the station on the walls,
Altho' late in November,
Were ads. of things that had transpired
In August and September:
The State Fair bills, and other things —
But, what's the use of frettin'?
I know a lot of other towns
Much worse than old Van Etten.

THE BORE

SOMETIMES I meet him on the street,
Sometimes in shop or store,
I can't escape him, if I try,
This ever-present bore.

He talks, and talks, until it seems
His talk will ne'er be o'er ;
He thinks he's entertaining me,
This ever-present bore.

I wish his " gab " were somewhat less,
Or else his brains were more,
So he could see he's tiring me,
This ever-present bore.

I want to live a while, but now,
I'm troubled to the core,
For fear he'll be the death of me,
This ever-present bore.

And when I'm gone, place o'er my tomb
These words and nothing more :
" This fellow, he was talked to death
By that consummate bore."

THE KICKER

HE kicks because the weather's cold,
Then kicks because it's hot;
He kicks if it's raining hard,
Then kicks if it is not.

He kicks against the churches all,
Then kicks against the schools;
He kicks because some folks are smart
Then kicks because of fools.

He kicks on all improvements, and
Then kicks on all that's best;
He kicks on half the folks in town,
Then kicks on all the rest.

He kicks when any train is late,
Then kicks if it's on time;
He kicks to spend a quarter, and
Then kicks to spend a dime.

He kicks upon his taxes, and
Then kicks upon his land;
He kicks upon the village choir,
Then kicks upon the band.

He kicks if he is feeling well,
Then kicks if he is sick;
He kicks to buy a postage stamp,
Then kicks to make it stick.

He kicks upon his coffee, and
Then kicks about his meat;
He kicks whenever he's at home,
Then kicks upon the street.

He kicks upon his hired man,
Then kicks upon his chores;
He kicks upon his mother-in-law,
Then kicks her out of doors.

He kicks because he likes to kick,
Then kicks to have the name;
He kicks because he's won the name;
Then kicks to have the game.

He kicks all through his earthly life,
Then kicks till out of breath;
He kicks until he's all kicked out,
Then kicks himself to death.

“ FISHIN’ FEVER ”

WHEN the wint’ry snows have melted,
And the birds begin to sing,
And the air, so soft and balmy,
Fills the mind with tho’ts of spring;
Then it is pa leaves the office,
And if sought for he’ll be found
In the hen park or the garden,
Digging fish worms from the ground.

Then it is my ma gets busy,
And I always get in line,
For I have to help my mother
Through the great house-cleaning time.
Mother is an awful worker,
So’s Aunt Jane, and Uncle John,
But we can’t depend on father,
When the “ fishin’ fever ” ’s on.

Cleaning house is simply dreadful,
Seems to me it doesn’t pay;
And I’m sure I’d never do it
If I only had my way.
Oh! if pa would only help us,
But he’s certain to be gone,
For house-cleaning always happens
When pa’s “ fishin’ fever ” ’s on.

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When pa gets the "fishin' fever,"
It don't matter how much work
There is at the store or office,
Pa is always bound to shirk;
And he'll tramp each little streamlet,
Until ev'ry trout is fed,
Soaking fish worms, getting feet wet,
Ma thinks he should soak his head.

Pa says, " 'Fishin' fever' 's catching ";
But there's one thing that I wish,
When pa's catchin' "fishin' fever,"
He would sometimes catch a fish.
Ma likes fish, so does my father,
Also Jane and Uncle John,
But we never have fish dinners
When pa's "fishin' fever" 's on.

O! for some great anti-toxin,
It would surely be a boon,
If 'twould cure pa's "fishin' fever,"
Make him ever more immune;
So he'd not be seen at midnight
With a lantern on the lawn,
Catchin' horrid old night walkers,
When his "fishin' fever" 's on.

Yes, this "fishin' fever" 's dreadful,
And my pa, he's got it bad,
Last year it was something fearful.
This, the worst pa's ever had.
Doctor says, he will recover,
Thinks he'll soon improve quite fast,
When pa gets enough of fishin',
And house-cleaning time is past.

OTSELIC VALLEY — A SONG

Tune, "Sweet Nola Shannon."

THERE'S a quiet spot
Down among the hills,
Where the birds sing sweetly
Near the shady rills;
Fondly turns my heart,
As afar I roam,
To my old companions
And my childhood home.

CHORUS

Otsellic Valley! I am thinking of thee,
Thy fields and woodlands
Dear are to me;
Home of my childhood,
To thee I'll be true;
Otsellic Valley! how I do love you.

Mem'ry paints for me
Pictures of a stream,
Winding through the valley,
In the sunlight's gleam;
Near its shady bank,
That I loved so well,
Is the dear old homestead
Where I used to dwell.

As my thoughts go back
To those early years,
Thoughts of old companions
Fill my eyes with tears;
And when I am tired
Of life's busy ways,
In that pleasant valley
May I end my days.

A DAY DREAM

ONE day in sunny June
I strolled alone,
Across the meadow,
To the field beyond,
 Close by the foot of which there flowed
 a stream.
There, in a pensive mood,
I sat me down,
And many a subject
There I pondered on,
 Until I seemed to fall asleep and dream.

And in my dreaming,
As I now recall,
I thought to search the world,
To find the spot
 Where dwelleth naught but happiness and
 joy.
And power was given to me,
So I at once
Might fly where'er
My fancy did desire,
 To find the place where troubles ne'er
 annoy.

Within a home of
Luxury and wealth
First I alighted,
And a while did stay,
 To judge if happiness reigned there
 supreme.

I heard harsh words,
And many a cruel taunt,
Saw dissipation's mark
On every face,
 Then flew away ; glad it was but a dream.

Next in this day dream,
As it seemed to me,
I found myself within
Another home.

 And said, " Here, sure, is joy and sweet
 content."

Its occupants were
Neither rich nor poor ;
There were no children
Playing round the door ;
 I came away as quickly as I went.

And thus continually
I seemed to go,
Entering various places,
Far and near,
 To find a spot where I'd be pleased to
 stay.

But, somehow, in each home
There was a note
Discordant, that would jar
Upon my nerves;
 So, on my wings, in dreams, I soared
 away.

Until at last,
Within a valley fair,
Sheltered by hill and woodland,
I beheld
 An humble cottage, peaceful and serene;
Children in joyous glee
Played 'round the door,
With rosy cheeks,
Bespeaking perfect health;
 The sweetest sight my eyes had ever seen.

The sun was sinking
Toward the western hills;
The men were slowly plodding
From the field,
 Tired; for in June the summer days are
 long.
I heard the cow-bell tinkle
Down the lane;
The milk pails rattle;
Then across the stream
 The vesper sparrow trilled its evening
 song.

Then, when at last
The toil of day is o'er,
I see them gather
For the evening meal;

Three generations represented there:
Grandfather, with his thin
And snowy locks,
With folded hands in rev'rence
Bows his head,

As silently ascends their evening prayer.

Then, with such appetites
As labor gives
To those who live so much
In out-door air,

They all partake with joy the evening
meal.
With happy conversation,
Laugh, and joke,
The children's prattle
Mingling with the rest;

And none a note of discord ever feel.

Next, grandpa draws aside
The big arm chair,
And all the children
Quickly gather 'round,

Climb on his lap or scramble to his knee.

And, oh! such stories
As this grandpa tells:
Birds, animals, flowers,
And fairy tales.

The children clap their hands and shout
with glee.

And as I ponder
O'er this happy scene,
I think of strife
And competition strong

In places where men struggle after
wealth.

* * * * *

Position, fortune,
Honor, and renown
Are dearly purchased,
If, when these are won,
It's at the price of happiness and health.

HIS LAST TRIP

THE golden sunset's fading in the west,
And summer eve sinks now in quiet rest.
Come, friend, with me, as day gives place to
 night,
To yonder home where burns the taper light,
And watch with me; for one I used to know,
A brother trav'ling man, is lying low.
Long years of faithful service he has given,
To win success he faithfully has striven.

Altho' he loved the work that bade him roam,
He none the less loved family and home;
And oft looked forward, thinking of the day
When with his loved ones he at home might stay.
But tho' he oft had planned to quit the road,
Something propelled him on as with a goad,
Until, with body wrecked, and aching brain,
He languishes upon a bed of pain.

His faithful wife is ever by his side,
To see that every need is well supplied;
His children gather at the close of day,
To hear what their loved father has to say.
"Dear wife, so many years I've had to roam,
I've missed the joys and happiness of home;
And never dreamed that there could ever be
Devotion, such as you have shown to me.

“ If I’m restored to health, one thing is plain,
That with my wife and children I’ll remain.
These past few weeks have taught me, darling
 wife,
A happy home’s the dearest thing in life.
I’ve been so anxious to increase my trade,
And earn the sal’ry which my firm has paid,
Through summer, winter, and through spring
 and fall,
I’ve scarcely had a day at home at all.”

To this his wife replied: “ My dear, you know
You should have left the road long, long ago ;
Or else have taken up an easier line,
That would not occupy quite all your time.
You’ve loyal been and generous, indeed,
And faithfully supplied our every need,
Excepting one, to me that’s been denied,
The comfort of a husband by my side,—

“ With words of love, and tenderness to cheer,
And smooth the path, and drive away the tear,
Tho’ there be love, you’ll surely have to own,
Hearts starve for want of love that’s never
 shown ;

And thus its been, while you were far away,
My heart was starving for you day by day.
But even now, could I but see you well,
My heart its happiness could never tell.”

The husband sighed,— she stooped to raise his
head;

One farewell kiss — the trav'ling man was dead.
Gone to that land where love immortal burns,
“The bourne from whence no trav'ler e'er
returns.”

And so it is; we build our castles rare,
And life in youth seems wondrous sweet and fair.
We say, “Some day I'll reach my heart's desire,
A happy home, where burns affection's fire.”
We make our plans and labor night and day,
We just begin to live, then fly away.

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